

The Defence of the Faith

LECKY'S TESTIMONY.

It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists.—W. E. H. Lecky.

CARMACK ON RELIGION.

"I dispute no man's freedom of opinion, though why any man should be willing to believe that man has no pre-eminence over a beast I do not know. You say that you can not believe the miracle of the resurrection. Let me tell you the story of a greater miracle than that. It is the story of a poor peasant, a member of a despised, and subject race, himself despised, the place of his birth despised by his own countrymen. In a little while he dies a felon's death and all those above him forgot he ever lived. Yet somehow his words lived on.

"Philosophy with all its wisdom, priest-craft with all its terrors, kings wielding the iron power of all the world, but over armies, over dying dynasties and crumbling thrones, rivers of blood and seas of fire, that power swept on and on until it has made conquest of the north, until every king on every throne bows down in adoration to the dead peasant of Galilee and the very instrument of his felon's death has become a symbol of salvation to all mankind. Do you believe that story? It is the story of a greater miracle than that a man died and rose from the dead.

"Young gentlemen, be not among those who scoff at religion, which is the last hope of the world, whose consolation you yourself will need in the time of affliction and the hour of death."—E. W. Carmack.

SCEPTICAL INSTRUCTORS.

The teacher who comes from the Holy of Holies into the classroom will never knock the solid foundation of spiritual certainties out from under the feet of his scholars by any process of critical investigation. He will never displace until he can replace, never pull down until he can build better. Under the combined effect of the secularizing tendency and of destructive criticism the younger generation has had a hard time intellectually and religiously. A negative process always indicates immaturity.

It should not be possible in any of our Christian colleges for students to write home, as some do today, that "our teacher in science laughs at the uselessness, not to say ridiculousness, of prayer, and our instructor in the Bible tells us that Genesis is little else than a collection of Babylonian myths."—Dwight M. Pratt, D. D., in the *Homiletic Review*.

LIBERAL IDEA OF RELIGION.

A pretentious advocate of broad ideas, the pastor of one of the five or six Unitarian churches in the South, which have struggled for existence for many years, has lately publicly expressed himself thus:

"Take the doctrine of the vicarious atonement, which is certainly immoral, and no wonder the whole cult that surrounds it is discredited. The teaching that morality outside of faith or grace is useless or evil is an offense against the decent principles of life that smells to heaven. When salvation is a gift instead of an achievement it has no ethical basis."

The doctrine of the vicarious atonement is the very heart and substance of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, believed by the whole church, both Catholic and Protestant, except by the Unitarians and Rationalists. At this season of the year it is especially emphasized in most churches. The above statement, coming from a man who represents a bare handful of adherents, that this doctrine is immoral, is itself immoral in its effrontery and in the opinion of all who accept the Scriptures as God's revelation to man; it is blasphemous. Unitarians complain when the name of Christians and Christian fellowship are denied them.

This representative of a falling cult exclaims, "The spectacle of the Unitarians being excluded from the federation of the churches was enough to make a saint blush for Christianity." This "religious liberal" holds that religion is progressive. It may be demonstrated by a single example that in its opposition to the Gospel Unitarianism has not progressed much beyond the first Christian centuries, while in common honesty it has progressed backward. In a work which has been partially preserved in the writings of Origen, a Roman writer, Celsus, who lived about A. D. 150, says that Jesus was the natural Son of God only in the sense in which all men are the children of God; that it is ridiculous to believe in miracles such as the changing of water into wine, raising the dead, etc.; that it is wrong to believe in the divinity of Christ, and folly to believe in an atonement by his death upon the cross, or in the resurrection. To assume a supreme being and to strive after perfection, this is the only rational religion, according to this writer. Thus was the whole wisdom which is now paraded by the Unitarians as the greatest progress of the twentieth century, already advanced a few decades after the death of the Apostles. The lecturer taunts the church for "holding on to mediaevalism like grim death," while he himself is warming over the stale pagan wisdom of 1750 years ago! For who was Celsus? A pagan and one of the bitterest opponents of Christianity, a man who, by his writings, incited the bloody persecutions of the Christians. He did not have the audacity, however, to pass his views as Christian truth. He was honest enough to call himself a pagan and to fight on the side of paganism against the name of Christ. The modern followers of this heathen enemy of Christ love to boast of their "progress." The only progress this barefaced paganism has made since the days of Celsus is that now it has become bold enough to assume for itself the name of Christianity and to claim that it alone is the genuine and true religion of Christ.—L. V.

The Westminster chapel, London, of which G. Campbell Morgan is pastor, has decided to give one-tenth of its aggregate income to foreign missions. This is in addition to what the individual members give independently.

The men of America spend more in a year for tobacco than the whole Christian Church has spent in the last five hundred years in missions to the pagan world. Between voluminous puffs, we can hear hundreds of them saying, "We do not believe in missions."